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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Report of the Secretary-General

(in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 51/131)

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 51/131 of 13 December 1996. Paragraph 8 of the resolution reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"8. Requests the Secretary-General:

"(a) To provide all necessary facilities to the Special Committee, including those required for its visits to the occupied territories, so that it may investigate the Israeli policies and practices referred to in the present resolution;

"(b) To continue to make available such additional staff as may be necessary to assist the Special Committee in the performance of its tasks;

"(c) To circulate regularly to Member States the periodic reports mentioned in paragraph 6 above;

"(d) To ensure the widest circulation of the reports of the Special Committee and of information regarding its activities and findings, by all means available, through the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat and, where necessary, to reprint those reports of the Special Committee that are no longer available;

"(e) To report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the tasks entrusted to him in the present resolution".

2. All necessary facilities were provided to the Special Committee. Arrangements were made for it to meet in February, May/June and August 1997. Furthermore, the Special Committee carried out a field mission to Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic in May/June 1997. Two periodic reports and the twenty-ninth annual report of the Special Committee have been circulated to Member States (A/52/131 and Add.1 and 2).

3. Pursuant to paragraph 8 (d) of resolution 51/131, the Department of Public Information undertook the following activities:

(a) The Department of Public Information continued to provide press coverage of the meetings of the Special Committee. Extensive press and audio-visual coverage was also provided for the meetings of the Commission on Human Rights. The methods used by the Department to provide this coverage included production of press releases, publications, television news packages and radio programmes, and organizing press briefings and briefings for the public;

(b) The Department continued to disseminate United Nations information materials, documents and press releases on the activities of the Special Committee and the Commission on Human Rights through the global network of United Nations information centres and services in 69 countries, the 359 depository libraries in 141 countries and electronically through the Internet. The Department also continued to make information materials available to non-governmental organizations through its Resource Centres in New York and Geneva;

(c) The Department provided press coverage to the Special Committee's field mission to Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic from 30 May to 9 June 1997. Press releases about the activities of the Committee were issued at Headquarters and United Nations Information Service at Geneva and the United Nations Information Centres at Cairo and Amman, and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia assisted with media coverage during the Committee's mission in that region.

4. It should be also noted that, on 18 June 1997, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale to all States drawing attention to resolutions 51/131, 51/132, 51/134 and 51/135.